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A
L E T T E R
TO THE
FELLOWS of SION-COLLEGE;
AND TO
ALL THE CLERGY
WITHIN THE
BILLS OF MORTALITY,
AND IN THE
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX.

Humbly proposing their forming themselves into a
SOCIETY, for the Maintenance of the WIDOWS
and ORPHANS of such Clergymen.

To which is added,
A SRETCH of some RULES and ORDERS suitable to that
Purpose.

By FERD^o. WARNER, L.L.D.

RECTOR of QUEENHITHE.

A N D

PRESIDENT of SION-COLLEGE.

L O N D O N:

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MDCCLXIV.



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LETTER, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

IT hath long been Matter of Astonishment to many people, that in this Age of Charity to distressed Objects of every kind, no Provision should have been made for the Widows and Orphans of the CLERGY on a legal or a firm Establishment. The Charter granted to the Corporation for their Relief, in the Reign of CHARLES the Second, and the few Hospitals or Houses for this purpose which have for some time past subsisted in three or four particular Counties, are extremely insufficient. They take in but a small part of the vast Number of Objects of this sort which deserve Relief, and that small part is relieved too in a very scanty measure. The Corporation, it must be owned, is under a very good Regulation, and well and wisely conducted: but the Widows are to wait,

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perhaps many Years, before they can be admitted upon the List; “so much more numerous, “it is said, are the Objects than the Annuities “for them:” And therefore it is no wonder that such as can make no interest with the Court of Assistants, are never admitted on it at all.

But when they are so fortunate as to succeed, their Annuity is no more than FIVE or SIX pounds a year; to which they are no longer entitled than whilst they have no Assistance from any other Fund of the yearly value of Ten pounds: and this Pittance, which is given to poor Parish-Widows, is deem'd a Provision for a Gentlewoman; for one who hath not been used to the mean and servile Occupations which the others have, but who must now submit to them or starve. For how deficient must FIVE or FIFTEEN pounds a year prove in the Maintenance of such a one, if she is encumbered too, as many of them are, with a numerous little offspring? Indeed this Provision—if it must be called so—when it is compared with the wants of All the Widows and Orphans of the Ministers of the Church of England, rather convinces us of the Necessity of establishing some farther and more ample Fund for their Subsistence, than of the Decency of our sitting down contented with this as sufficient or satisfactory. The want of such a Fund is a Grievance
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that hath been much lamented, and long and loudly complained of; and as every age becomes more and more expensive, the Grievance grows worse and worse.

There is a Provision for the Widows of the Officers in the Fleet and Army; and a Provision by *Act of Parliament* for the Widows of the Ministers in the Church of Scotland: and how it hath happened that the Distresses in the Families of our CLERGY, have had no Establishment for their Relief, it is impossible perhaps to say; for no other reason, it is probable, than that Every body's Business is generally thought to be Nobody's. The legal Maintenance of the Clergy, like that of the Officers, is only for their Lives; in MANY Cases but a bare Competance, in most not even that: and therefore it does not enable them to leave their Families in such a comfortable Situation, as is commonly seen among us thro' every other degree of men. The Clergy too have sacrificed all the Views and Expectations of acquiring a Fortune for their Families in the Way of the World; being debarred by their Profession from any Trade or Commerce to assist a scanty Income; and yet they are expected to live, and should live if they are supposed to do any good, above the Rank of Labourers and Mechanicks; they should live like Gentlemen.

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This being evidently a Cause of great Importance to Religion, and to the Honour and Interest of our Order, some Attempts have been made, you know, by Particular Persons, to extend a Provision for ALL the Widows and Orphans of the Clergy throughout the Kingdom. How All, or Any of these Attempts came to fail, it is not my purpose now to enquire. One good Effect at least hath resulted from them: they have put the Clergy in several Dioceses and Counties, upon forming themselves into Societies, and raising Funds—much after the Manner which had been recommended—and confined to the Widows and Children of each respective Diocese and County. If this Method should become General—as it is to be hoped it will—the Principal End which was aimed at will be answered; though perhaps not near so effectually, as by One Society and One Fund established by Charter for the Whole Kingdom. But what could not be effected for the Whole Kingdom, it seemeth incumbent on the Clergy of Every Diocese, or County, or Archdeaconry, to be persuaded to do for themselves.

With this View it is that I have taken the Opportunity, given me by the Office which I have this Year the Honour to fill, of addressing myself to You, my Brethren, on this Subject;
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not only in the Hope of our establishing some Provision for the Families of the most respectable Body of Clergy in this Kingdom, but also of the Influence that our Example will probably have over those Counties, which are yet without any such Provision. Indeed it were to be wished, that the Clergy in the Metropolis had been the first to promote this good Work among them; and that the Zeal and Attention of our Brethren in several Counties, *in those especially which make up the other part of this Diocese*, had not reproached us with Coolness and Inactivity. It is never too late however to do good: and though the Presidentship of Sion College, which is thought to give a Propriety to this Application, gives me no Connexion with any but the Clergy of the CITY OF LONDON, properly so called, yet on such an Undertaking as this, it seemed expedient to address myself to All who have employment under Episcopal Jurisdiction, within the Bills of Mortality, and in the County of Middlesex: and should any of our Brethren *out of these Limits* desire to unite themselves with us on this Occasion, there could be no Objection, it is presumed, to admit them into the Society, and to allow them to share in the Benefit resulting from it.

To all other Arguments which may be urged in Favour of such a Design in general, it may
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be added in particular, that our Way of Life, and the District that we reside in, make our Expences much greater than those of our Brethren at a Distance; and consequently render a Provision for our Families, when Widows and Fatherless, still more Necessary than in other places. The Good however which will result from this Undertaking will not be confined only to These, it will extend to others; and this Undertaking will be of great Service to the Charity which is now under the Management of the Corporation abovementioned. For if it doth not enable them to encrease their Pensions, it will considerably diminish the Number of Widows who now apply for them, who by their Residence or Connexions are mostly those in our own Division: and therefore the Application will be more easy, and the Benefit more attainable, by the Widows of such Clergymen as cannot afford to contribute to the Fund which is now proposed. But of the Utility of the Undertaking, there cannot be any doubt. It may be proper however just to mention, that a voluntary Subscription among ourselves, is not only Honourable for the Order, but in such a City as This, and in such an Age of Charity as the Present, it may reasonably be expected, will have many Benefactions and Donations added to it: for surely it is a Charity as Important in itself
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and as Useful to the Publick as any others. The superior Clergy, though their Families may want no Assistance of this Kind, will doubtless contribute annually to the Support of those which do: and it is to be presumed too, that the CITY OF LONDON, as a Corporation, will generously aid a Fund, that the Families of their Ministers in Holy Things, of Men devoted to the Public Service in its most important Interests, may not be liable to the Distresses of the Common Poor.

In order to prevent any Objections that may arise from the supposed Difficulty of executing a Scheme of this Sort with any Success, I have taken the Liberty to add a Sketch of such Rules and Orders as may be proper to be established; not as a Model to be exactly followed—I have no such Presumption—but to give a General View of what may be effected, and of the Method in which it may be effected by such a Society. Nor should I perhaps have hazarded this Sketch, if it had not been much the same with Another that was approved of some years ago, by many of the most Eminent and most able Men in Church and State*: and yet when there is such a Foundation as this to go upon, much

* See a Scheme of a Fund for the Maintenance of the Widows and Children of the Clergy. By FERD^o. WARNER. 1752.

Time, it is very obvious, must be saved at a public Meeting; since several of these Regulations may be supposed, without any Vanity, to be of Use. But their Usefulness or Impropriety cannot be examined with any Accuracy, if they were produc'd only at a public Meeting. They are therefore now presented to You for your mature Consideration; that they may receive such Alterations and Amendments from You, as may be necessary to make them perfect: and I hope You will forgive me, that I take the Liberty to intreat the Favour of Your Attendance at Sion College, *at Eleven o'Clock on the 18th of December*; in order to form such a Society as is above-mentioned, and to establish such Rules and Orders for the Government of it, if these should be found improper, as the Majority shall approve of.

To engage You the more readily to comply with this Request, I have the Pleasure to inform You, that the General Design hath been communicated to our present Able and Worthy Diocesan, who hath Honoured it with his Approbation, and recommends it to be taken into Your Consideration. Let me hope therefore that this Proposal will be received with good Wishes and good Words at least; and that Objections merely to This, without offering Emendations,

dations, or producing any Better, will have but little Weight against a Design of such great Utility to our Order, were it recommended only by,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient

humble Servant,

FERD^O. WARNER.

P. S. It is desired that this Letter may be communicated, as much as possible, to all the Clergy belonging to each respective Church or Chapel within the Bills of Mortality; and that those Clergymen who cannot attend at Sion College, will signify their Sentiments by some who can.

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A Scheme of a Society, for the Maintenance of the Widows and Orphans of the Clergy, within the BILLS OF MORTALITY and in the County of MIDDLESEX.

The Rules and Orders of which may be such as follow.

I. **T**HAT this Society consist of All such Persons, Laity or Clergy, as shall annually subscribe *One Guinea*, or more, or make a Donation of 20 Guineas.

II. That the Lord Bishop of London for the Time being shall be President; and the Dean of the Arches, the Archdeacons of London and Middlesex, and the President of Sion College, for the time being, the Vice Presidents of this Society.

III. That the President, or either of the Vice-Presidents, shall have power to summon, as often as shall be thought necessary, a General Court to be holden at Sion College, of such as subscribe annually *Two Guineas* or more, or who make a Donation of 20 Guineas; who shall be called "Governors of the Fund for the Maintenance of the Widows and Orphans of the Clergy, within the Bills of Mortality, and in the County of Middlesex."

IV. That

IV. That a General Court of Governors, shall, without any such Summons, be annually there held, on the *Third Tuesday in January*, at Eleven o'Clock; in order to transact the Affairs of the Society according to the Rules and Orders hereafter mentioned, and to alter or add to them as Occasion shall require.

V. That twelve Persons to be called Directors, shall be chosen out of the Governors at the First General Court, who shall continue till others are elected.

VI. That all other Directors shall be elected at the annual General Court.

VII. That the Secretary of Sion-College, or may be Secretary of this Society; who shall continue in Office as long as he behaves well, with such Salary as the Governors shall appoint at the first General Court.

VIII. That if any Director shall die before his Year expires, or shall refuse or neglect to act as a Director, the rest of the Directors shall choose another in his stead.

IX. That the Directors, at least Seven, and so many of the Governors as shall think fit, shall meet at Sion-College at Eleven o'Clock on the *Second Thursday in January*, to audit the Account of Benefactions and Subscriptions; to examine the Vouchers for Receipts and Payments;

ments; to receive the Certificates of Deaths, and the Affidavits hereafter mentioned; to direct the Purchase of Government Securities with any Stock that shall be left in the hands of the Treasurer when the Pensions are paid; and in order to lay the Accounts of the Society before the Governors at the ensuing General Court.

X. That
may be Treasurer of this Society, to whom all Subscriptions and Benefactions shall be paid.

XI. That on the day before the holding a Court of Directors on the Second Thursday in January, the Secretary shall settle with the Treasurer the Cash and Receipts of the Society, and produce at the said Court the Certificates of Deaths, and the Affidavits, which shall be then publicly entered.

XII. That blank printed Acquittances shall be provided by the Secretary out of the public Stock, to be signed by the Treasurer, for the Subscriptions and Benefactions to this Fund; and blank printed Policies for the Pensions.

XIII. That a Common Seal shall be provided which shall be affixed to every Policy, and every Policy be signed by three or more Directors at their annual Court on the day abovementioned.

XIV. That a Number of Policies so signed and sealed shall be then delivered to the Secretary;

tary ; for which He is to account to them at their next Court.

XV. That a Book shall also be provided and remain with the Secretary, in which shall be inserted the Rules and Orders of the Society, and the Additions and Alterations which may be made at any General Court ; all the Subscriptions, Donations, and Devices of any personal or real Estate which may be made or given to this Fund, together with the Proceedings of the Society every Year ; to which Book all the Members may have recourse without fee or reward.

XVI. That when any Business is transacted relating to this Society, about which there is any Disagreement in Opinion, either in a Court of Directors, or in a General Court, it shall be determined by the Majority of the Directors or Governors present.

XVII. That all Subscriptions, after the first, shall be paid every year to the Treasurer within Ten days after Christmas day.

XVIII. That Benefactions and Donations of any kind (other than of a real Estate, which must be by Deed indented, sealed and delivered in the presence of two Witnesses twelve Calendar Months before the death of such Donor, and be enrolled in Chancery six months after the Execution)

cution) may be paid to the Treasurer at any time.

XIX. That every Clergyman, who is or may be possessed of any Benefice, Chapelry, Lectureship, Curacy, or other Ecclesiastical Employment under *Episcopal Jurisdiction* within the BILLS OF MORTALITY and in the County of MIDDLESEX [or elsewhere] who subscribes Two Guineas or more annually, except such as are hereafter excepted, shall be entitled to a Policy.

XX. That every such Clergyman as aforesaid, except such as are hereafter excepted, who does not subscribe Two Guineas or more annually towards this Fund, shall, besides his Subscription of One Guinea, pay, at the same time that he becomes a Member of this Society, if he intends that his Widow or Children shall be entitled to a Pension at his Death, a *Fine* of two Guineas more towards a Capital Stock for a Policy.

XXI. That every such Clergyman as aforesaid, except such as are hereafter excepted, who sends to the Secretary the Name of his Benefice; or if other Employment, where and under whom; an Acquittance from the Treasurer of his Subscription—and Fine, if he subscribes only One Guinea—shall receive a Policy from the Secretary without fee or reward, entitling his Widow

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or Children to such a Pension as is hereafter mentioned; and the said Acquittance shall be the Voucher for the Delivery of such Policy.

XXII. That the annual Subscriptions, together with the Interest of the Capital Stock arising from the Policy and the Benefactions of any kind, or the Income of any Estates that may be given to this Society, shall within Thirty days after Christmas day be applied to make a Dividend yearly for the Pensions.

XXIII. That printed blank Notes shall be provided out of the public Stock, payable by the Treasurer, signed by three or more Directors at their annual Court, on the *Second Thursday in January*, with the Sums of such Dividend inserted, according to the Number of Claimants; which shall be issued out every year by the Secretary within thirty days after Christmas day to such Widows and Children or their Agents, as shall make out their Claim in the manner here directed.

XXIV. That the Widow of every such Clergyman as aforesaid, except such as are hereafter excepted, shall by Virtue of his Policy and Subscription be entitled to such a Dividend as shall every year arise from the Subscriptions and from the Interest of the Capital Stock, according to the Number of Claimants.

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XXV. That

XXV. That if any Clergyman as aforesaid, except such as are hereafter excepted, shall die without leaving a Widow, but shall leave one or more Children, such Child or Children shall be entitled to a Pension for seven Years: which Pension, in case there shall be more Children than one, shall be paid to such of them as the said Member of this Society shall appoint by Will; and in default of such Appointment, shall be equally divided among such of them as are under Fourteen years of age, if any such there be.

XXVI. That the Pensions to be received by the Widows and Children for the first seven years after the Establishment of this Fund, shall not exceed Twenty Pounds a year, and the surplus shall go to the Capital Stock.

XXVII. That if any such Widow shall die, or marry a Non-Subscriber before the Lapse of Ten Years after the Commencement of her Pension, and who shall have a Child or Children by her former Husband, such Child or Children shall be entitled to so many of the ten Year's Pensions as shall not have been received by the Mother. The Widows Pension not to cease on her Marriage with any Person, if she had no Children by her former Husband.

XXVIII. That

XXVIII. That if any such Clergyman as aforefaid ſhall diſcontinue his Subscription, and be five Quarters in Arrears to this Fund at the time of his death, the Widow or Children of ſuch Member ſhall have no Benefit from his Subscription.

XXIX. That no ſuch Clergymen as aforefaid, who is of the Age of fifty Years or upwards, and unmarried at the time of the Eſta bliſhment of this Society, ſhall be capable of being a Member with a Policy ; unleſs in extraordinary Caſes to be allowed of at the annual General Court.

XXX. That no ſuch Clergyman as aforefaid, who is in Prieſt's Orders at the time of the Eſta bliſhment of this Society, and who does not within Twelve Months after ſubſcribe One Guinea or more annually, or pay the Arrears that would be due—if unmarried, the Fine for the Policy to be paid ad libitum—ſhall be capable of being a Member with a Policy.

XXXI. That no ſuch Clergyman as aforefaid, who does not ſubſcribe One Guinea or more annually within a Year after his Admittance into Prieſt's Orders, or pay the Arrears that would be due—if unmarried, the Fine for the Policy to be paid ad libitum—ſhall be capable of being a Member with a Policy.

XXXII. That no Widow of any such Clergyman as aforesaid, who shall be unmarried at the time of the Establishment of this Society, shall be allowed any Benefit from this Fund, if he should die within three Months after his becoming a Member with a Policy, unless she shall transmit an Affidavit to the Secretary, made before the next Justice of Peace, that at the time of his Admission He was in good Health,

XXXIII. That the Widows and Orphans who receive the Benefit of this Fund, shall pay no Fee, Reward, nor Gratification to any Officer or Servant of this Society on account of such Benefit.

XXXIV. That the Pensions shall be paid according to the time of the Death of each of such Clergymen qualified as aforesaid : i. e. if He shall die four Months before Christmas, his Widow, or Children if he leaves no Widow, shall be entitled to two thirds of that Year's Dividend or Pension ; and so in proportion.

XXXV. That on or before the *Second Thursday in January*, Every Widow shall transmit to the Secretary a Certificate of her Husband's Death, under the hand of the Minister of the Parish where he was buried, and attested by a Subscriber if the said Minister is not such ; a Certificate or Affidavit of her Marriage with him ;

him; and a Paper setting forth the Number of Children she had by him then alive, distinguishing their Age, and that she is still a Widow, or married again to a Member of this Society, or if she had no Children by her former Husband, to what other Person.

XXXVI. That the Child or Children of such Clergymen qualified as aforesaid, and not leaving a Widow, shall on or before the *Second* *Wednesday in January* transmit to the Secretary a Certificate of their Father's Death in like manner, with a Paper setting forth the Number and respective Ages of his Children then alive.

XXXVII. That Every year, at the time abovementioned, these Certificates or Affidavits, together with the Papers abovementioned, shall be transmitted to the Secretary by All the Widows and Children as long as they have any Claim: all which shall be filed by the Secretary, and deposited in Sion College.

XXXVIII. That All Widows and Children shall have Power to constitute an Agent, under Hand and Seal, to receive their Pensions for them, which Letter of Attorney shall be valid till another is produced.

XXXIX. That the Pensions of every Widow shall be paid to the time of her Death (unless she marry with a Non-Subscriber, and
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has Children then living by her first Husband) within thirty days after Christmas day, to her Heirs, Executors, Administrators and Assigns.

XL. That Notice shall be given in the public Papers, by the Secretary, of the annual General Court, for five days together, before the *third Tuesday in January*, and before any other General Court which the President or Vice President shall either of them be pleased to call.

XLI. That Whosoever does not pay his Subscription every year before the *Second Thursday in January*, shall be spoken or written to by such of the Directors as are of his Acquaintance; and in default of such, by the Secretary,



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